```
VZCZCXRO1440
PP RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHIHL RUEHKUK
DE RUEHGB #0952/01 0971109
ZNY SSSSS ZZH
P 071109Z APR 09
FM AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2575
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
```

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 BAGHDAD 000952

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/02/2029
TAGS: PGOV PREL MOPS MARR PTER IZ EPET EFIN
SUBJECT: PM DISCUSSES SECURITY, SONS OF IRAQ, ANBAR
POLITICAL TRANSITIONS, THE DOHA SUMMIT AND DETAINEES

REF: BAGHDAD 860

Classified By: Charge d'Affairs Patricia A. Butenis for reasons 1.4 (b)
 and (d)

SUMMARY

1.(S) In his regular weekly meeting with MNF-I Commanding
General (CG) Odierno and Charge d'Affaires Butenis April 2nd,
Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki agreed with the CG that a major
push would be needed to see security progress in Mosul.
Maliki voiced appreciation for Coalition Forces (CF)
assistance in apprehending Adil al-Mashhadani, a Sons of Iraq
leader who was arrested on terrorism charges. Maliki said he
thinks Anbar is in a dangerous situation due to the upcoming
transition to the new Provincial Council and Governor,
Baathist infiltration, and infighting among the Sunni
community. Maliki was happy with the positive environment at
the Doha Arab Summit, and said Arab leaders had acknowledged
the political progress Iraq has made. The CG explained our
safeguards on detainee releases in response to Maliki's
belief that detainees were being released by MNF-I before the
GoI had a chance to adequately review their files. The PM
called for a meeting with the Security Agreement Joint
Subcommittee on detainees, the judiciary and the intelligence
services to review the issue. End summary.

Security Challenges

¶2. (S) The CG said that he recently visited Mosul and noted
good progress on security, but there is still considerable
work to do. The plan for securing Mosul would follow the same
procedure as used in Baghdad: clear an area, secure it and
then provide development assistance so civilians see tangible
benefits. Old Mosul is the likely source of recent terrorist
activities originating from Mosul proper and it presents a
difficult operating environment due to its high population
and small area. While the CG articulated that the decision to
utilize CF assistance in the cities after June rests with the
PM, the PM acknowledged the need for joint assessments of ISF
capabilities. The PM indicated the need for an operation like
Basra with a large ground force manning checkpoints and an
intensive intelligence campaign. The CG pointed out that
Basra was occupied by militant groups, while Old Mosul
harbors terrorist groups. Also, the Iraqi Police (IP) in
Mosul are not as capable as the police were in Basra, and
while the MoI is working on improving IP training and
operational effectiveness, that will take time. The PM and CG
agreed that there are concerns about the Mosul Police Chief
and that a strong intelligence effort would be needed in
Mosul. The PM added that IP in Mosul has been infiltrated by
Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) and insurgents. The PM added that he
hears daily reports about assassinations and sticky bomb
attacks in Mosul and Diyala, and he would be inviting his
operational commanders to provide him assessments of the
security situation in key areas. He noted the news doesn't

cause him to fear a surge of violence, but it is a continual
concern.

¶3. (S) The CG said he hopes the Ninevah Provincial Council
will make a difference when it is sworn in during the
following weeks. The PM said the Provincial Council distrusts
the existing police and asked for 2 to 3 additional
battalions of police, chosen from people they trust. The MoI
has no budget to hire them, so the only option for more
police would be to transfer them to Mosul from elsewhere. The
PM said he trusted the IA Ninevah Operations Commander,
General Hassan. The PM said that the provincial council would
QGeneral Hassan. The PM said that the provincial council would
have to focus on reconstruction in order to turn the common
man away from terrorism, and the CG indicated he had
transferred engineers to the area to assist with development.
The PM told his aides he hoped the 580 billion Iraqi dinars
that had not been spent by the previous provincial council
would be available for the new one.

Arrest of Mashhadani

¶4. (S) The CG said that the operation against Sons of Iraq
(SOI) leader Adil al-Mashhadani was effective and limited
collateral damage. (Ref A). The arrest demonstrated that the
rule of law prevailed and that no one is above the law.
Public statements reinforced this message to counteract
assertions that the arrest was not politically motivated. The
PM expressed his appreciation for U.S. cooperation on the
arrest and noted that while Mashhadani was not working with
AQI, he was working with Saddam Hussein's daughter (Raghad

Hussein,) against the Iraqi government. The CG said reports
indicate that Fadhil residents are much happier now that
Mashhadani is gone; however, some elements were using the
event to spin two stories: that the arrest demonstrates that
SOI are not trustworthy, and another that the arrest
demonstrates the GoI is persecuting the SOI. The CG said it
is important to communicate that the arrest was in line with
the rule of law, and the SOI were being treated as the SOI
and GoI agreed. The PM congratulated the CG on the press
statements put out by the MNF-I spokesman on this subject.

¶5. (S) Remaining on the subject of the SOI, the CG voiced
concern that some in the GoI may have been conducting
unilateral, politically motivated arrests against SOI
leaders. He specifically mentioned the cases of LTC Ra'ad Ali
Husayn, a SOI leader in North Ghazaliyah, and Shaykh Najm
Abdullah, a SOI leader from the Aguq Quf area of Abu Ghraib.
The PM noted the names and agreed to investigate.

Baathist Infiltration in Anbar

¶6. (S) PM Maliki said the security situation is dangerous in
Anbar due to political infighting amongst the Sunnis. He had
been speaking to Deputy PM Rafi El-Essawi about concerns that
some SOI groups had been infiltrated by Baathist insurgents.
Maliki said that Baathists are also attempting to infiltrate
the Provincial Council as well as the GoI security forces.
The CG said he, too, has been meeting with Deputy PM Essawi
over concerns of Sunni political infighting and the potential
for the Sahwa movement to break apart. The people of Anbar
remain [k}Q:Q9QQQ1" Maliki said. He said he was
extremely pleased that Arab leaders were positive about Iraq,
and had been welcoming. He felt that the leaders believe the
provincial elections had been a positive step and said that
political
process is going in the right direction.

GoI Concerned about Detainees

¶9. (S) The CG noted concern about the considerable public discussion about detainee releases, and the PM said the releases are dangerous. The CG clarified that MNF-I has many safeguards in place. All detainee lists are provided to GoI and will be updated every 45 days. All detainee data, including fingerprints, are given to the GoI. MNF-I will continue to detain anyone the GoI considers dangerous, and is only releasing detainees who can not be legally held under Iraqi law. The PM said he feels both sides are too complacent with the release process, and the GoI needs to take a closer look at detainee files before allowing their release. The PM

BAGHDAD 00000952 003 OF 003

also wants to use a system whereby released detainees are released into the custody of a guarantor from the tribe or family who would be responsible if the detainee returned to violence. The PM said the Iraqi judiciary and security systems don't have enough time to review case files before detainees are released. The CG said the GoI is provided all detainee files for consideration, and as a result of feedback from the GoI, MNF-I had slowed the process to allow more time for review. The PM asked the CG and Charge to help him convene a meeting with personnel from the judiciary, intelligence community and Joint Subcommittee on detainees from the Security Agreement to discuss these issues.
BUTENIS